

A Snapshot of Endometrial Cancer

Incidence and Mortality

[Endometrial cancer](#) is both the most common type of [uterine cancer](#) and the most common cancer of the female reproductive system, accounting for approximately six percent of all cancers in women in the United States. Since 2006, [incidence](#) rates have increased among all population groups. Overall [mortality](#) rates have increased slightly since the mid-1990s. Although the incidence rate of endometrial cancer is lower in African-American women than in whites, their mortality rate is nearly twice as high as that in all other racial/ethnic groups.

Several factors are associated with an increased risk of endometrial cancer, including obesity, exposure to [endogenous](#) or exogenous [estrogens](#), [tamoxifen](#) use, and certain inherited conditions. Factors associated with a reduced risk include engaging in physical activity, taking combination oral contraceptives, and having a history of pregnancy and/or breastfeeding. Surgical removal of the uterus or [hormone therapy](#) is used to prevent endometrial cancer in women with endometrial [hyperplasia](#). There is no standard or routine [screening](#) test for endometrial cancer. Standard treatments for endometrial cancer include surgery, [radiation therapy](#), [chemotherapy](#), and hormone therapy.

It is estimated that approximately \$2.6 billion¹ is spent in the United States each year on uterine cancer treatment.

Source for incidence and mortality data: Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) Program and the National Center for Health Statistics. Additional statistics and charts are available at the [SEER](#) Web site.

¹ [Cancer Trends Progress Report](#), in 2010 dollars.

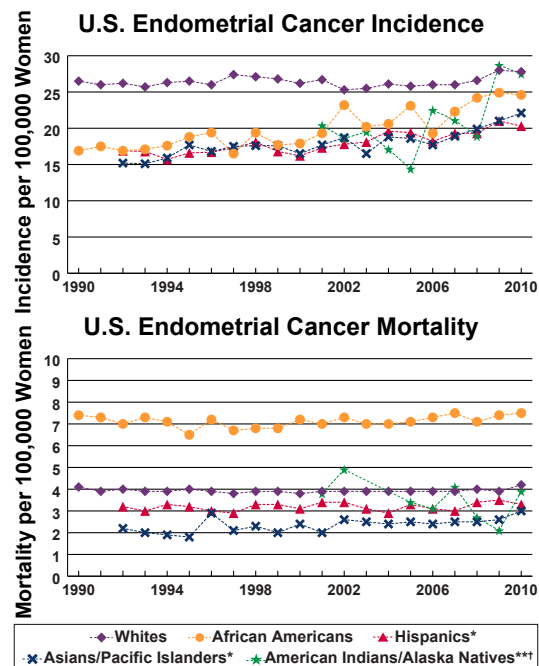
Trends in NCI Funding for Endometrial Cancer Research

The National Cancer Institute's (NCI) investment² in [endometrial cancer research](#) increased from \$17.1 million in fiscal year (FY) 2008 to \$19.1 million in FY 2012. In addition to this funding, NCI supported \$8.2 million in endometrial cancer research in FY 2009 and FY 2010 using funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).³

Source: NCI Office of Budget and Finance.

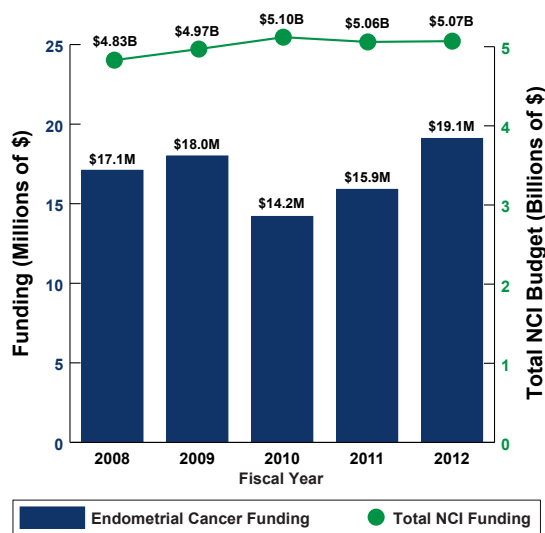
² The estimated NCI investment is based on funding associated with a broad range of peer-reviewed scientific activities. For additional information on research planning and budgeting at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), see [About NIH](#).

³ For more information regarding ARRA funding at NCI, see [Recovery Act Funding at NCI](#).



Source: Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) Program and the National Center for Health Statistics. Additional statistics and charts are available at the SEER Web site.

NCI Endometrial Cancer Research Investment



Source: NCI Office of Budget and Finance.

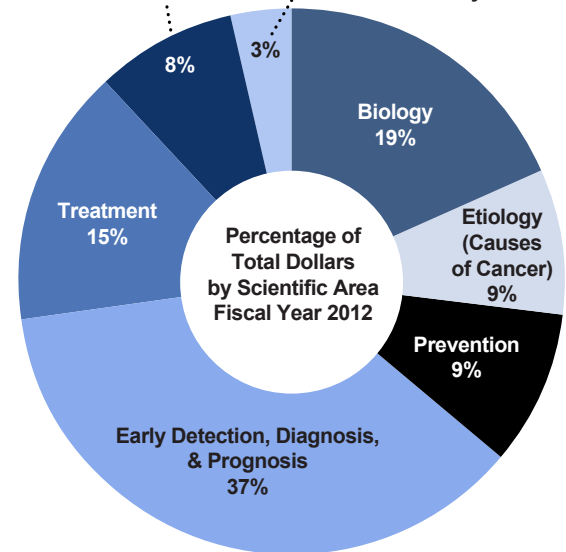
Examples of NCI Activities Relevant to Endometrial Cancer

- NCI's [Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics](#) conducts a number of endometrial-cancer-related studies, including [Assessment of Screening Modalities for Gynecologic Cancers](#), a feasibility study assessing the use of alternative sampling techniques in combination with molecular assays to detect endometrial and ovarian cancer.
- The [Breast and Gynecologic Cancer Research Group](#) supports studies on prevention and early detection of endometrial cancer, including a clinical trial exploring whether hormone therapy can prevent endometrial cancer in women who have [hereditary nonpolyposis colon cancer](#) syndrome, which increases the risk for endometrial cancer.
- The [Epidemiology of Endometrial Cancer Consortium](#) supports molecular [epidemiology](#) and genome-wide association studies of endometrial cancer.
- The [Mouse Models of Human Cancers Consortium \(MMHCC\)](#) has developed several [murine cancer models](#), including those of the reproductive system, which are available to the research community.
- [The Cancer Genome Atlas \(TCGA\)](#) researchers are systematically identifying the major [genomic](#) changes involved in more than 20 cancers using state-of-the-art genomic analysis technologies. Recently published results from the TCGA Endometrial Study revealed molecular characteristics in endometrial cancer that could provide insight on diagnostic classification and treatment strategies. [[PubMed Abstract](#)]
- One endometrial-cancer-specific [Specialized Program of Research Excellence \(SPORE\)](#) focuses on new approaches to preventing, identifying, and treating endometrial cancers.

Additional Resources for Endometrial Cancer

- The [What You Need To Know About™ Cancer of the Uterus](#) booklet contains information about the possible causes, symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer of the uterus. Information specialists also can answer questions about cancer at 1-800-4-CANCER.
- The NCI [Endometrial Cancer Home Page](#) directs visitors to up-to-date information on endometrial cancer treatment, prevention, genetics, causes, screening, testing, and other topics.
- Information on treatment options for endometrial cancer is available from [PDQ](#), NCI's comprehensive cancer database.
- [Clinical trials for endometrial cancer](#) can be found in NCI's list of clinical trials.

NCI Endometrial Cancer Research Portfolio
Cancer Control, Survivorship, & Outcomes Research, Scientific Model Systems



Source: NCI Funded Research Portfolio. Only projects with assigned common scientific outline area codes are included. A description of relevant research projects can be found on the NCI Funded Research Portfolio Web site.

Selected Advances in Endometrial Cancer Research

- In a study among Medicare beneficiaries, a [laparoscopic](#) hysterectomy for [stage I endometrial cancer](#) results in fewer complications than abdominal hysterectomy; however, uptake of this minimally invasive surgery has been slow. Published June 2012. [[PubMed Abstract](#)]
- In an international study, women who last gave birth at age 40 or older had less than one-half the risk of endometrial cancer as women who last gave birth before age 25. Published July 2012. [[PubMed Abstract](#)]
- The discovery of new genes that frequently are mutated in uterine [serous](#) carcinoma tumors points to potential new treatment targets for this aggressive form of endometrial cancer. Published January 2013. [[PubMed Abstract](#)]
- DNA from endometrial cancers can be detected in a standard liquid Pap smear, a promising step toward a broadly applicable screen for early detection of this cancer. Published January 2013. [[PubMed Abstract](#)]
- Click [here](#) to access selected free full-text journal articles on advances in NCI-supported research relevant to endometrial cancer. Click [here](#) to search for additional scientific articles or to complete a [search tutorial](#) on PubMed.